

English Language Learners/Development and Learning Disabilities:

Understanding Linguistic and Cultural Acquisition, Three-Tiered
Research-Based Interventions, and Eligibility for Special Education.



Graphics © 1998 Denise A. Ortiz

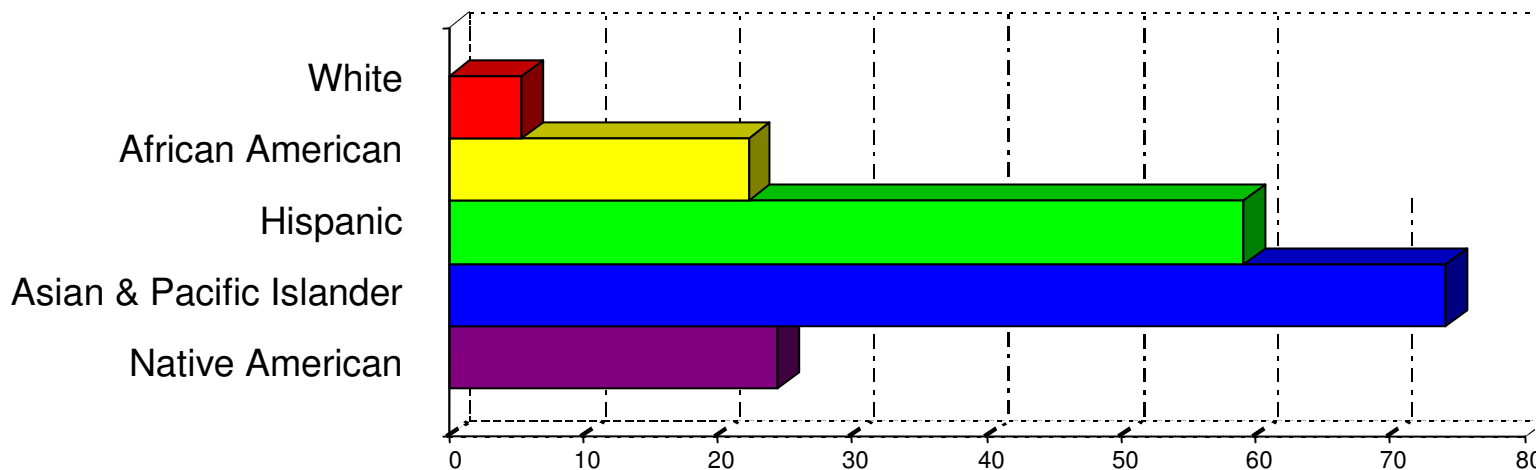
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A copy of this presentation can be downloaded from <http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~ortiz/files/>

Projected Change In U.S. Population According to Ethnicity

(in thousands)

ETHNICITY	1997	2015	% Change
White, non-Hispanic	194,571	205,019	5.4
African-American, non-Hispanic	32,298	39,512	22.3
Hispanic	29,348	46,705	59.1
Asian & Pacific-Islander non-Hispanic	9,443	16,437	74.1
American Indian, Eskimo & Aleut, non-Hispanic	1976	2,461	24.5



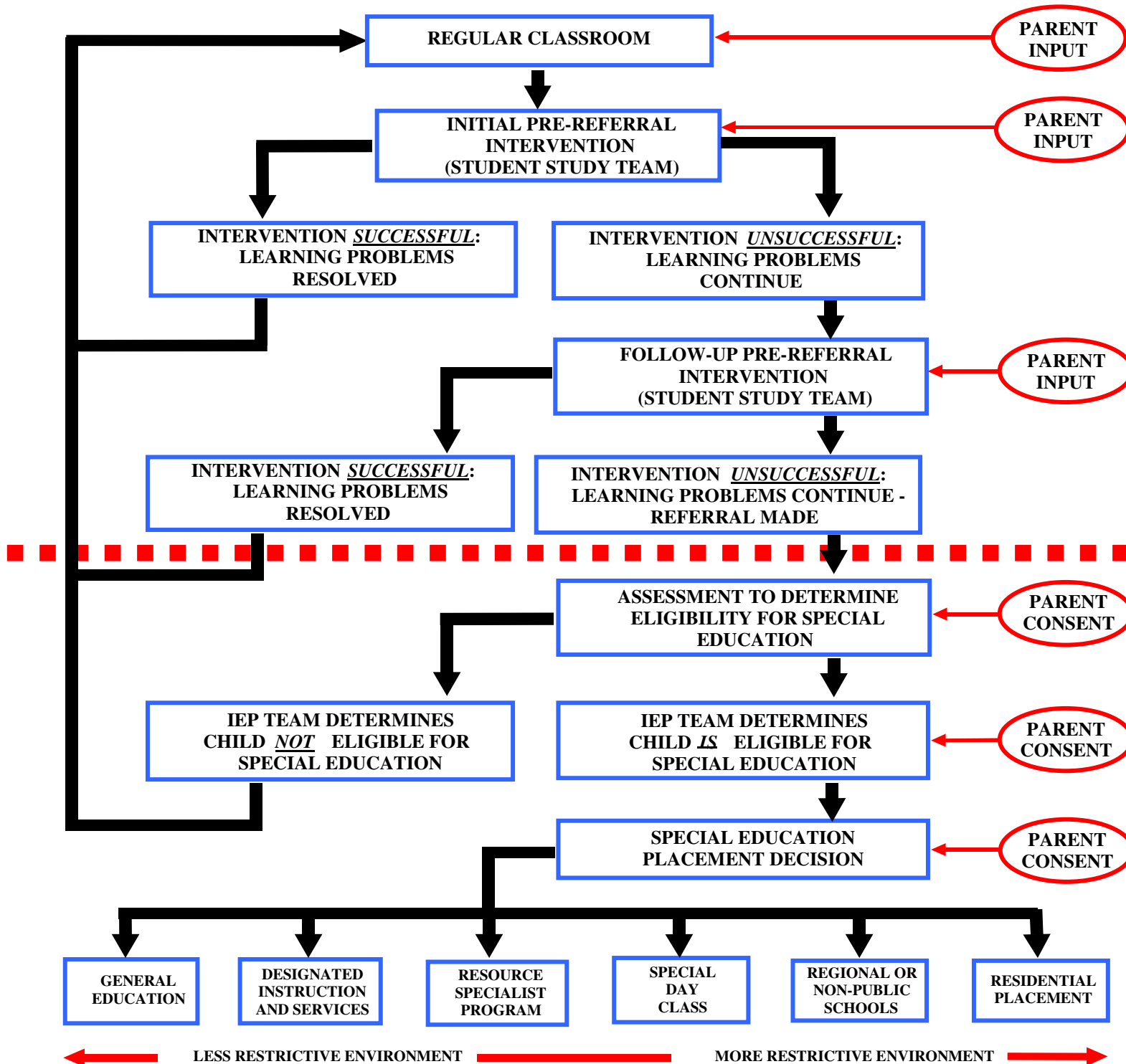
Source: Pollard, K. (1999). 1999 U.S. Population Data Sheet, Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau

Projected Change in U.S. Population by Selected States and Ethnicity

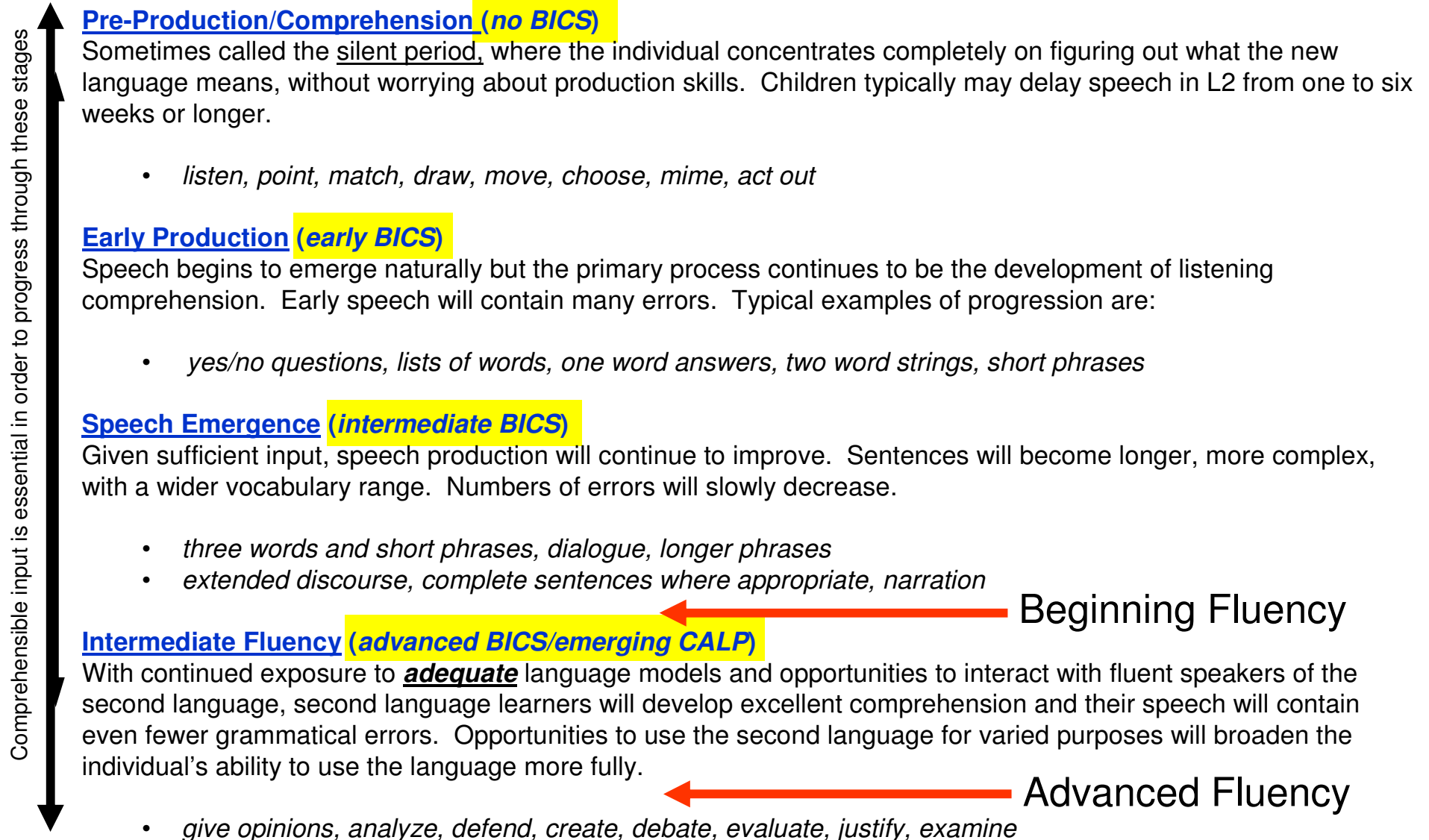
	WHITE	AFR. AM.	HISPANIC	ASIAN & PI	NATIVE AM.
Arizona	15%	40%	64%	64%	18%
California	-4%	13%	65%	86%	-10%
Nevada	17%	44%	81%	61%	4%
New York	-9%	9%	43%	62%	9%
Washington	18%	19%	78%	83%	36%



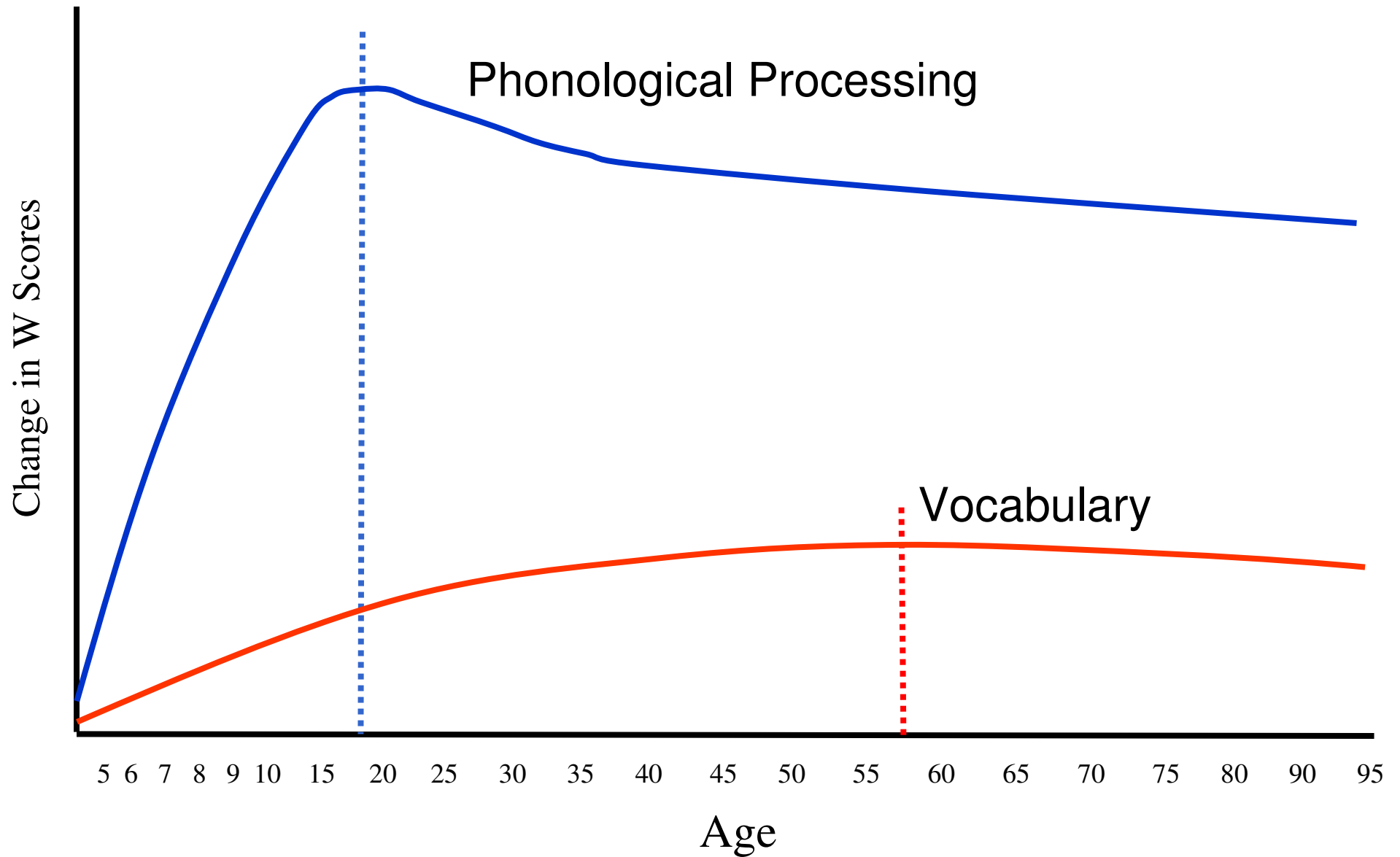
The Special Education Process: Pre- to Post-Assessment



Assessment of Diverse Children: Stages of Language Acquisition



Growth Curves for Phonological Processing and Vocabulary



Assessment of Diverse Children: Second Language Acquisition

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)

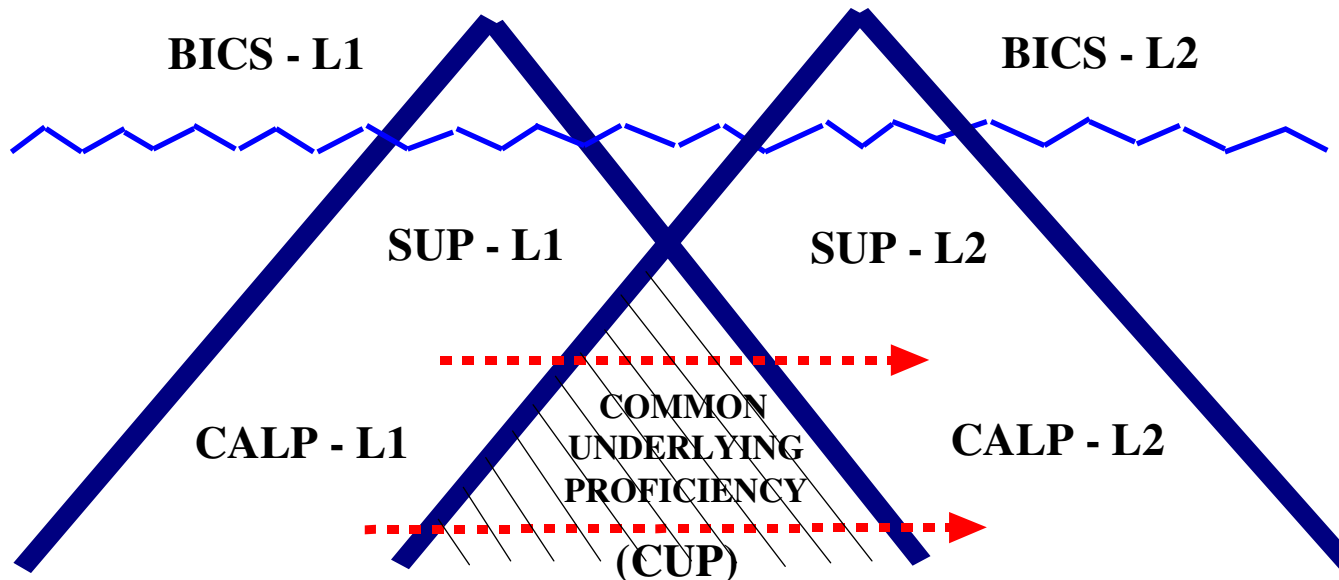
- ability to communicate basic needs and wants, and ability to carry on basic interpersonal conversations
- takes 1 - 3 years to develop and is insufficient to facilitate academic success

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

- ability to communicate thoughts and ideas with clarity and efficiency
- ability to carry on advanced interpersonal conversations
- takes at least 5-7 years to develop, possibly longer and is required for academic success

Cummins' Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis ("Iceberg Model")

- BICS is the small visible, surface level of language, CALP is the larger, hidden, deeper structure of language
- each language has a unique and Separate Underlying Proficiency (SUP)
- proficiency in L1 is required to develop proficiency in L2,
- Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) facilitates transfer of cognitive skills



Dimensions of Bilingualism and Relationship to Generations

Type	Stage	Language Use
FIRST GENERATION – FOREIGN BORN		
A	Newly Arrived	Understands little English. Learns a few words and phrases.
Ab	After several years of residence – Type 1	Understands enough English to take care of essential everyday needs. Speaks enough English to make self understood.
Ab	Type 2	Is able to function capably in the work domain where English is required. May still experience frustration in expressing self fully in English. Uses immigrant language in all other contexts where English is not needed.
SECOND GENERATION – U.S. BORN		
Ab	Preschool Age	Acquires immigrant language first. May be spoken to in English by relatives or friends. Will normally be exposed to English-language TV.
Ab	School Age	Acquires English. Uses it increasingly to talk to peers and siblings. Views English-language TV extensively. May be literate only in English if schooled exclusively in this language.
AB	Adulthood – Type 1	At work (in the community) uses language to suit proficiency of other speakers. Senses greater functional ease in his first language in spite of frequent use of second.
AB	Adulthood – Type 2	Uses English for most everyday activities. Uses immigrant language to interact with parents or others who do not speak English. Is aware of vocabulary gaps in his first language.
THIRD GENERATION – U.S. BORN		
AB	Preschool Age	Acquires both English and immigrant language simultaneously. Hears both in the home although English tends to predominate.
aB	School Age	Uses English almost exclusively. Is aware of limitation in the immigrant language. Uses it only when forced to do so by circumstances. Is literate only in English.
aB	Adulthood	Uses English almost exclusively. Has few opportunities for speaking immigrant language. Retains good receptive competence in this language.
FOURTH GENERATION – U.S. BORN		
Ba	Preschool Age	Is spoken to only in English. May hear immigrant language spoken by grandparents and other relatives. Is not expected to understand immigrant language.
Ba	School Age	Uses English exclusively. May have picked up some of the immigrant language from peers. Has limited receptive competence in this language.
B	Adulthood	Is almost totally English monolingual. May retain some receptive competence in some domains.

History of Academic Achievement for U.S. Immigrants

1908:

- 54% of New York's native-born 8th graders went on to 9th grade compared to 34% of foreign born
- 80% of urban, native-born, white 7th graders graduated but only 58% of Italian children did

1910:

- There were 191,000 Jewish children in New York schools, but only 6,000 were in high school, and the overwhelming majority dropped out.

1921:

- Half of all “learning-disabled” children in New York “special-education” classes were Italian

1931:

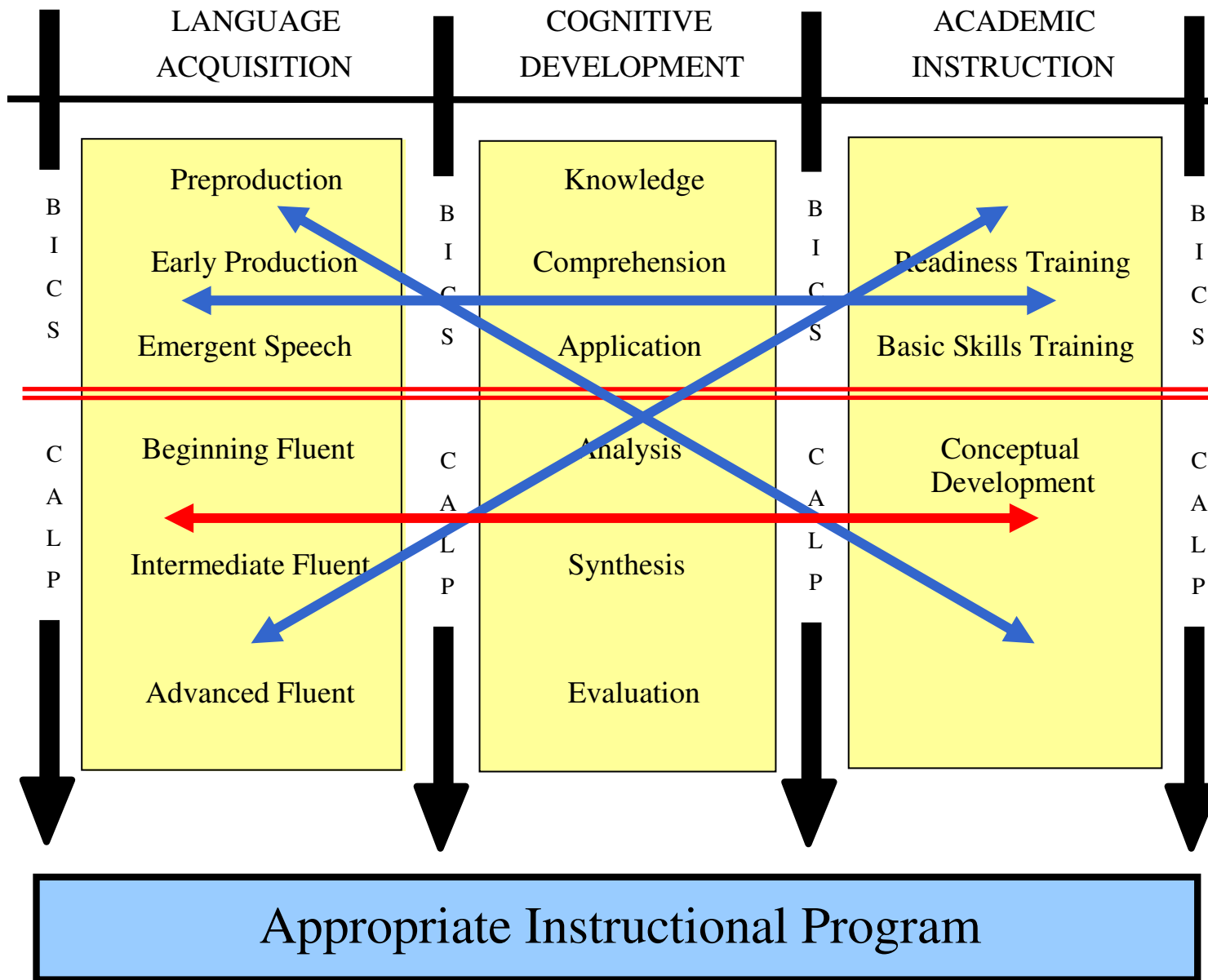
- Only 11% of Italians graduated high school compared with 40% overall

Current Academic Achievement for U.S. Latino Immigrants

1972 to 1995:

- Latino high school completion crept up from 66% to 70%
- 54% of Latino graduates now enroll in college, up from 45% (it's 64% for non-Latino whites)
- Latino high school graduates who complete college rose from 11% to 16% (for non-Latino whites it's 34%)
- Graduation rate for Mexico-born youths, age 15-17 years, is 74%
- More than 70% of Latino immigrants who came here before their sophomore year in high school go on to graduate

Parallel Processes in Development: Education follows Maturation



CULTURAL CONTEXT

Popular Misconceptions about Language Acquisition, Learning and Development

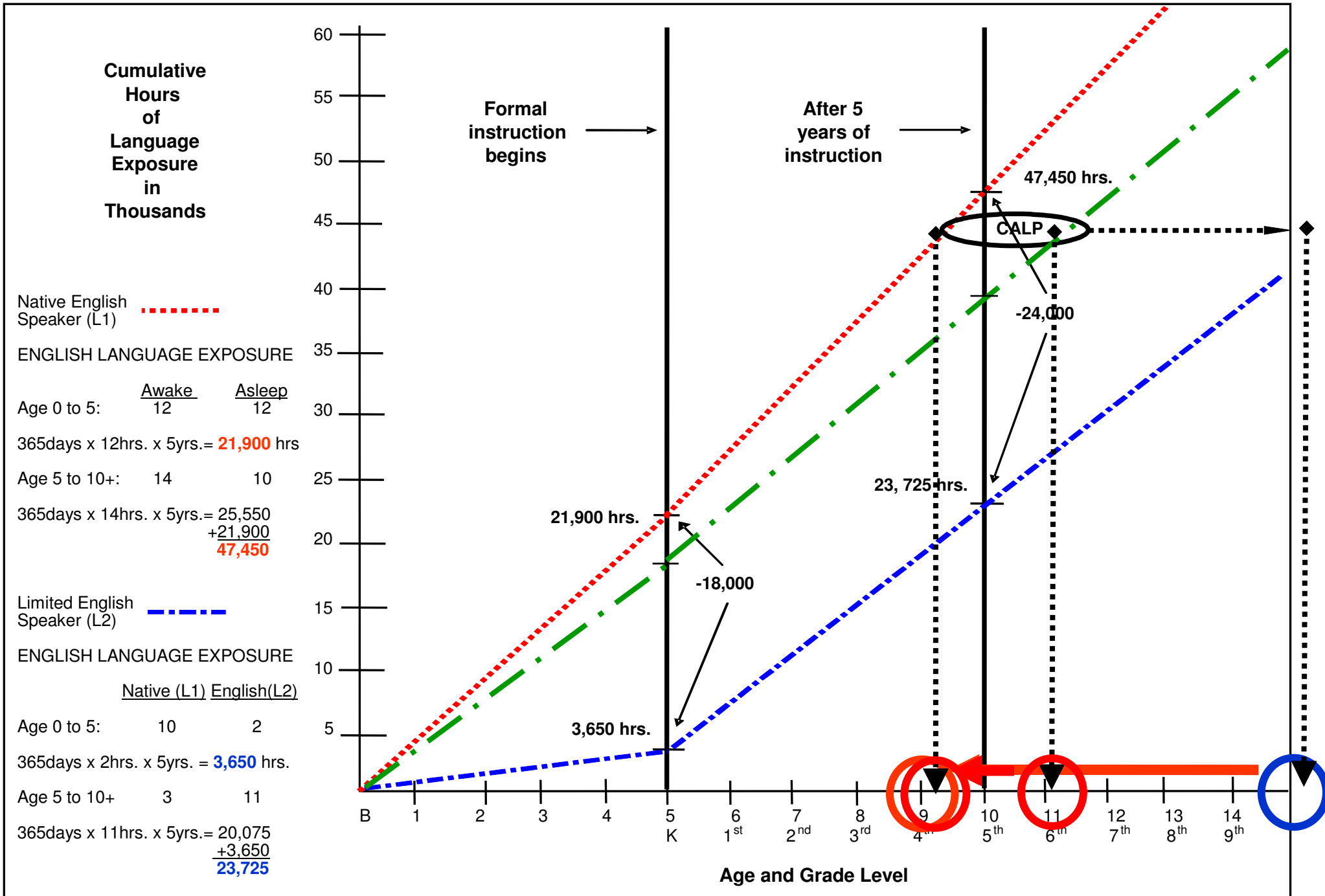
- Accent IS NOT an indicator of proficiency—*it is a marker regarding when an individual first began to hear/learn the language*
- Children DO NOT learn languages faster and better than adults do—*they only seem to because they have better pronunciation but CUP aids adult learners considerably*
- Language development CAN NOT be accelerated—*but having developed one language to a high degree (CALP) does help in learning a second language more easily*
- Learning two languages DOES NOT lead to a kind of linguistic confusion—*there is no evidence that learning two or more language simultaneously produces any interference*
- Learning two languages DOES NOT lead to poor academic performance—*on the contrary, students who learn two languages very well (CALP in both) tend to outperform their monolingual peers in school*
- Code-switching IS NOT an example of a language disorder and poor grammatical ability—*it is only an example of how bilinguals use whatever words may be necessary to communicate their thoughts as precisely as possible, irrespective of the language*

Assessment of Diverse Children: Developmental Implications of Language Difference

The 30 Million Word Gap

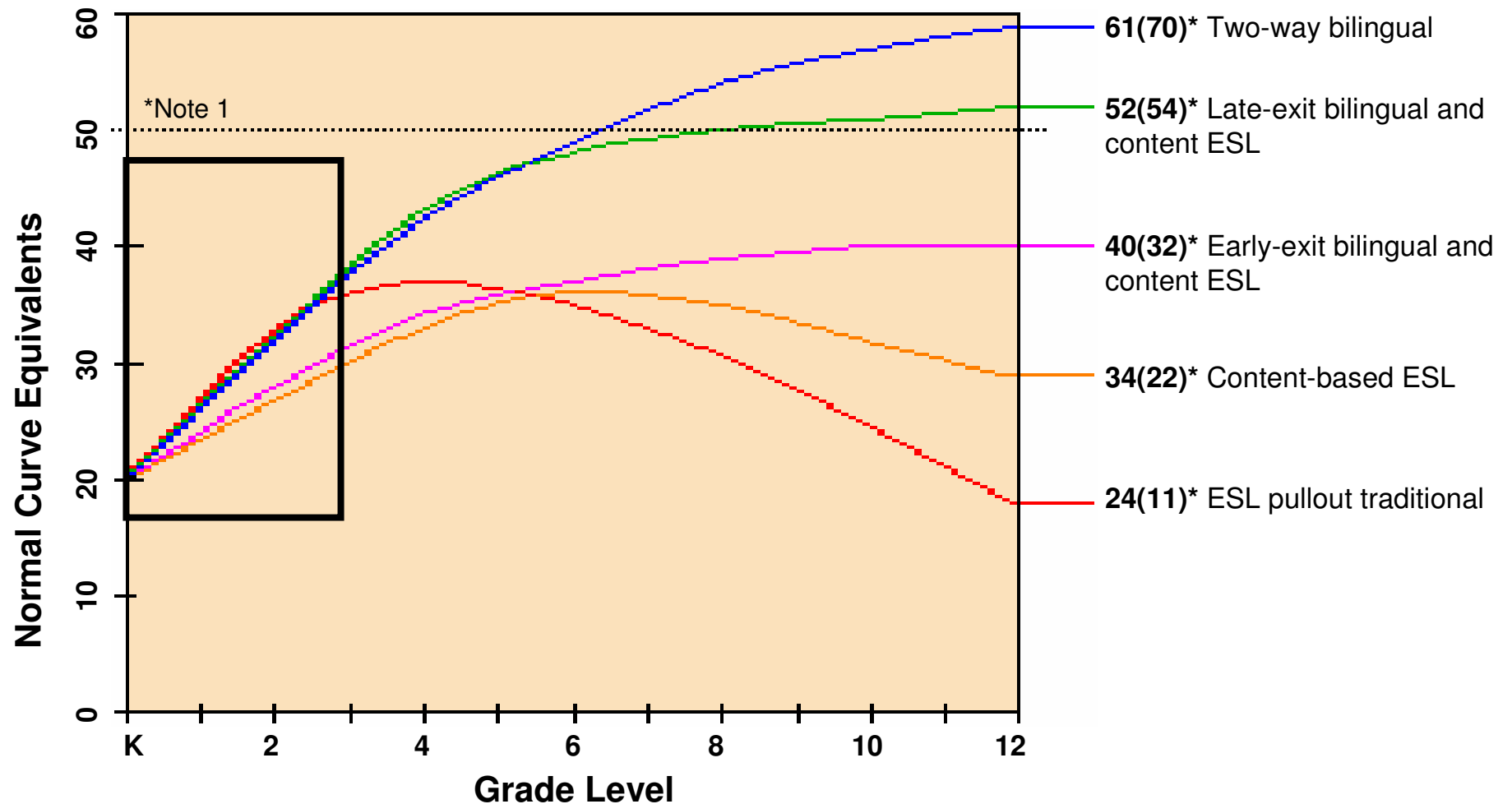
- *according to research by Betty Hart and Todd Risley (2003), children from privileged (high SES) families have heard 30 million more words than children from underprivileged (low SES) families by the age of 3.*
- *in addition, “follow-up data indicated that the 3-year old measures of accomplishment predicted third grade school achievement.”*

Assessment of Diverse Children: When do English Learners really “catch up?”



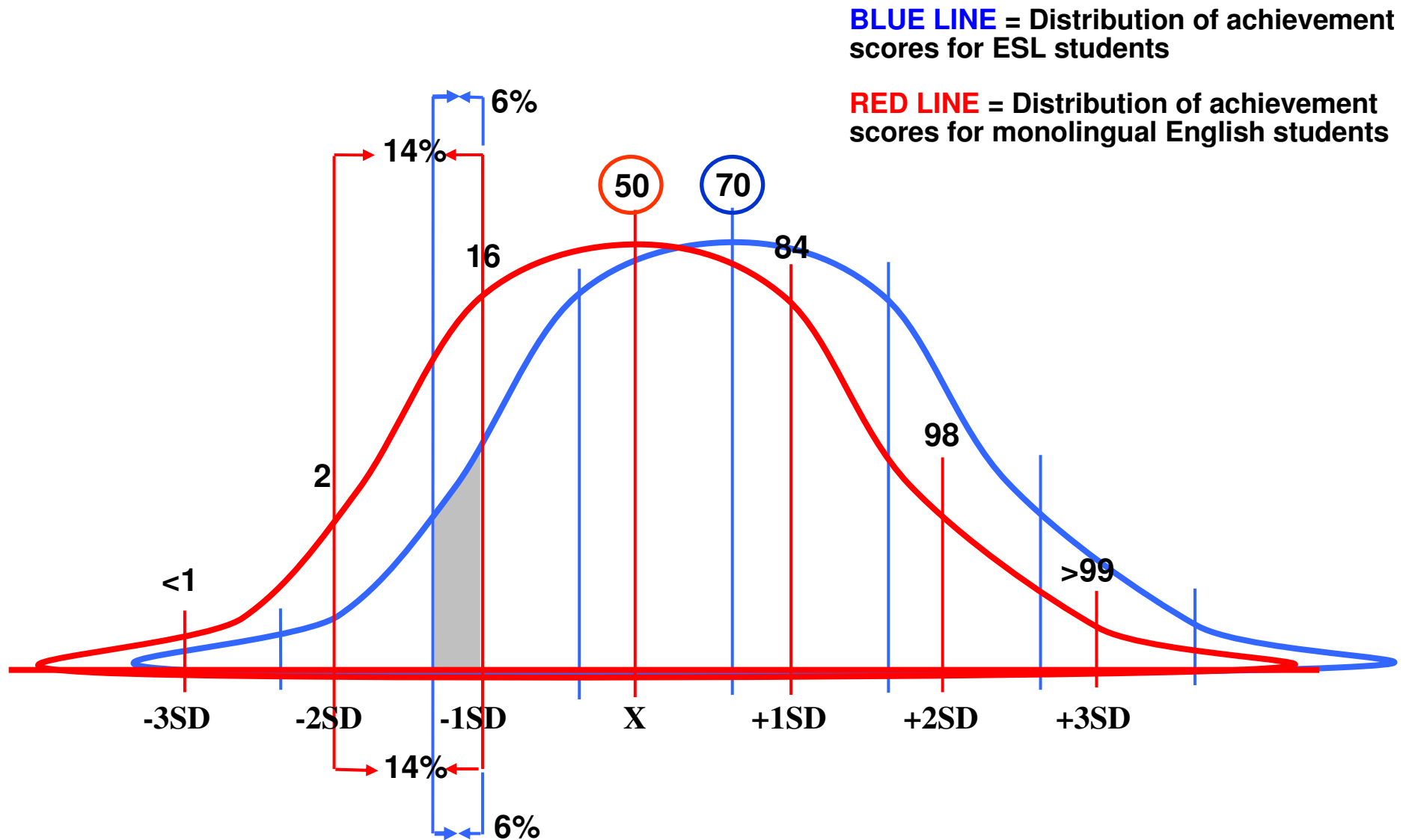
Assessment of Diverse Children: Bilingual Education Models and Achievement

General Pattern of Bilingual Education Student Achievement on Standardized Tests in English



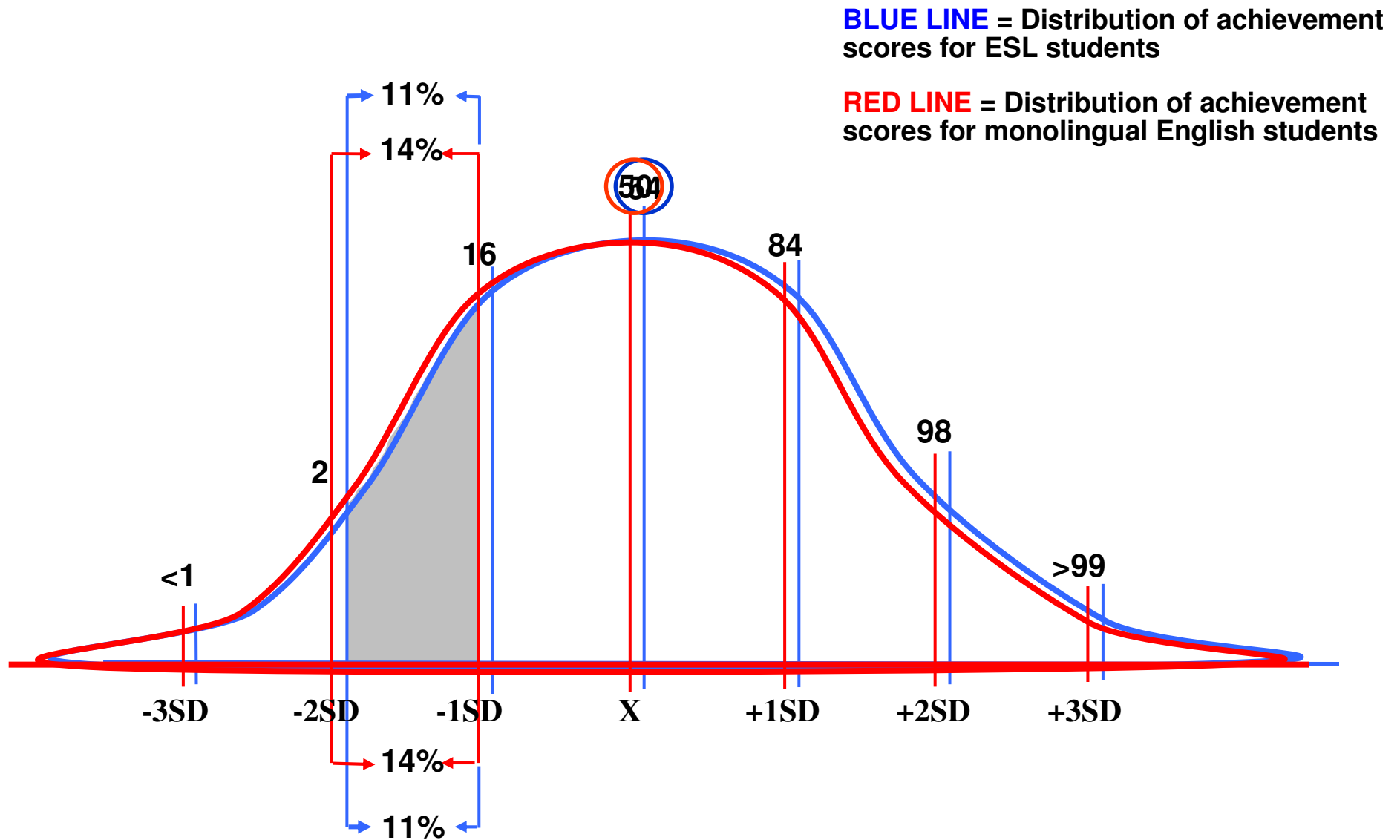
*Note 1: Average performance of native-English speakers making one year's progress in each grade. Scores in parentheses are percentile ranks converted from corresponding NCEs.

Model Comparison of Percentage of "At-Risk" Second Language Students



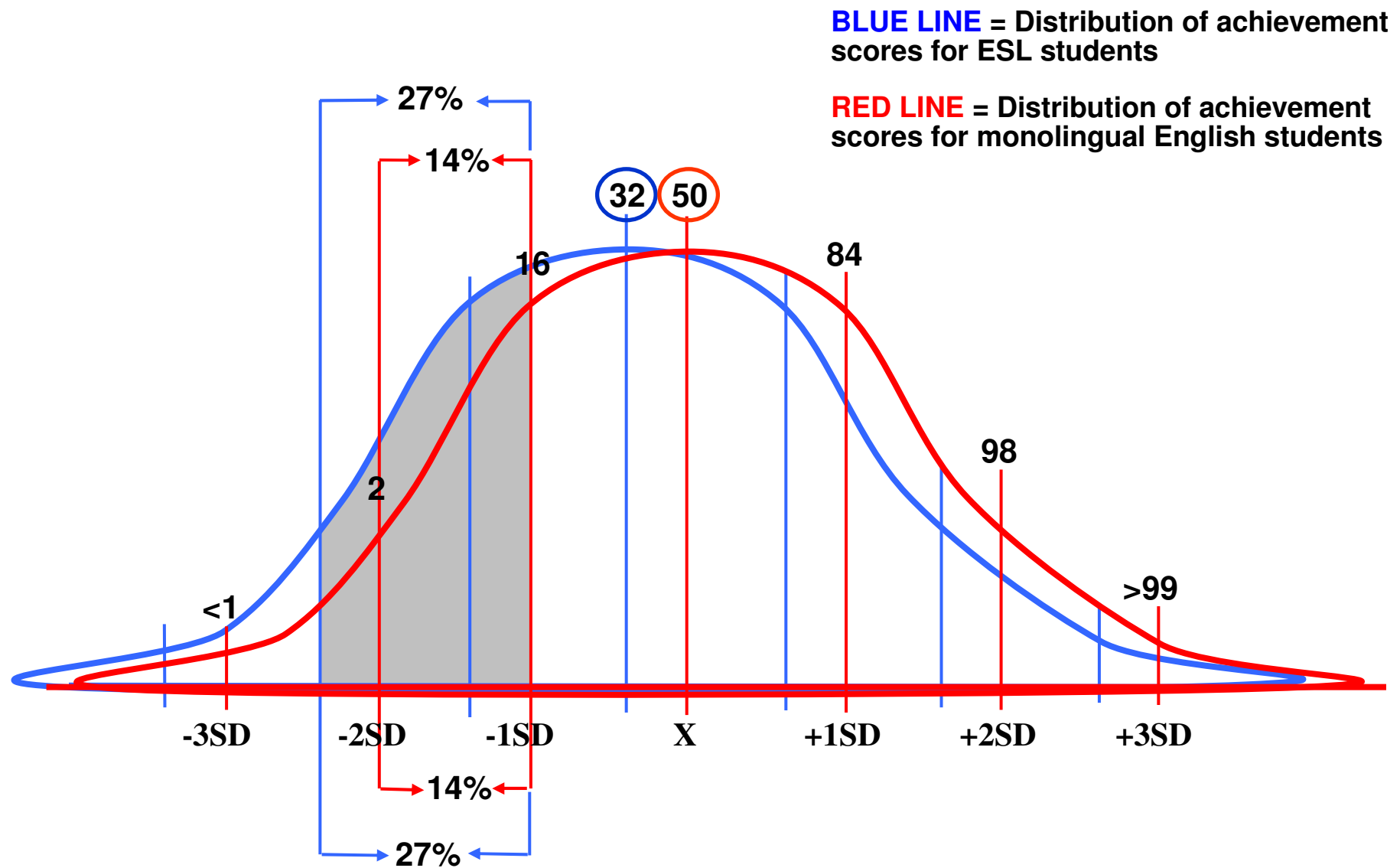
Two way bilingual (dual immersion) – 6% At-Risk

Model Comparison of Percentage of "At-Risk" Second Language Students



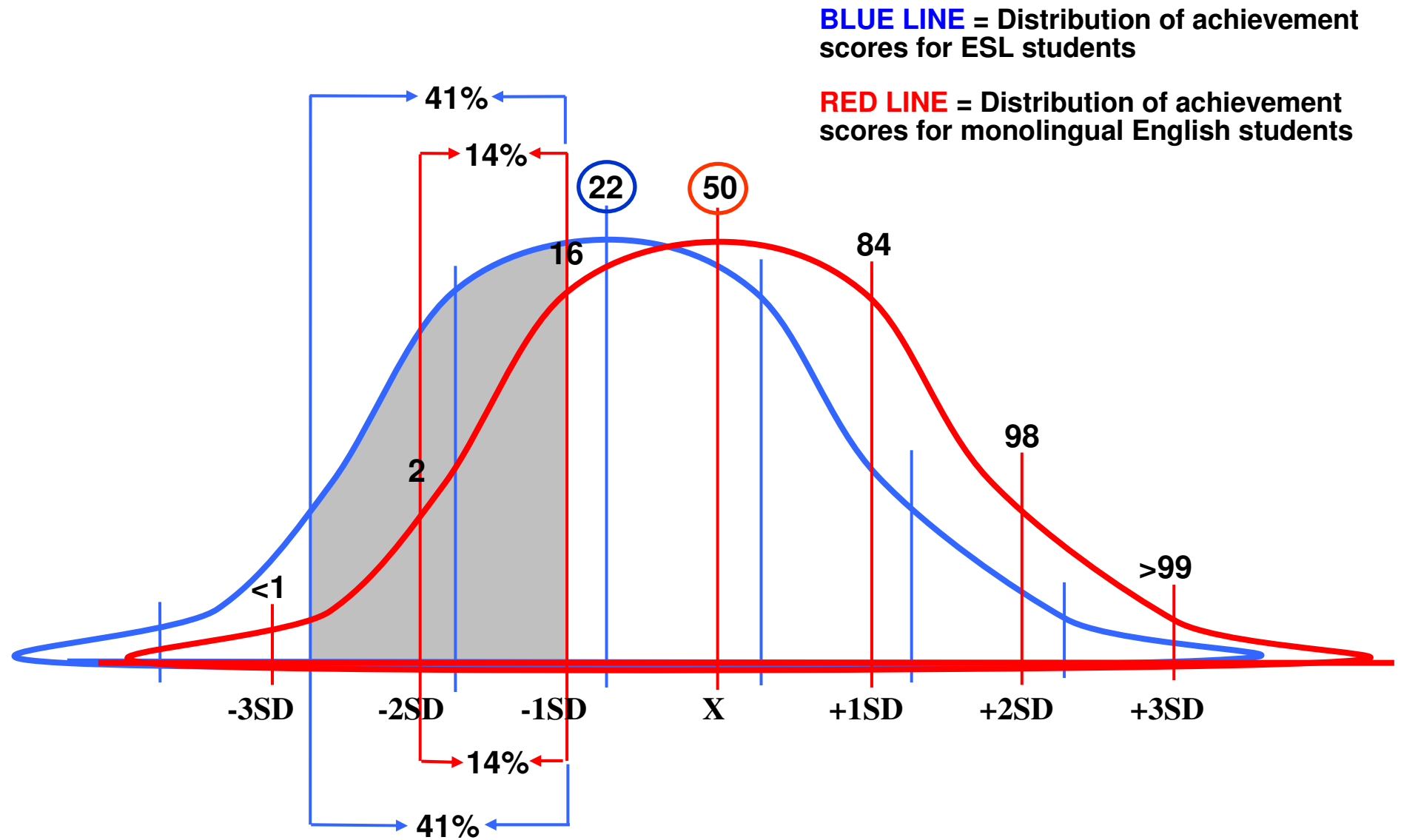
Late exit bilingual and content based ESL – 11% At-Risk

Model Comparison of Percentage of "At-Risk" Second Language Students



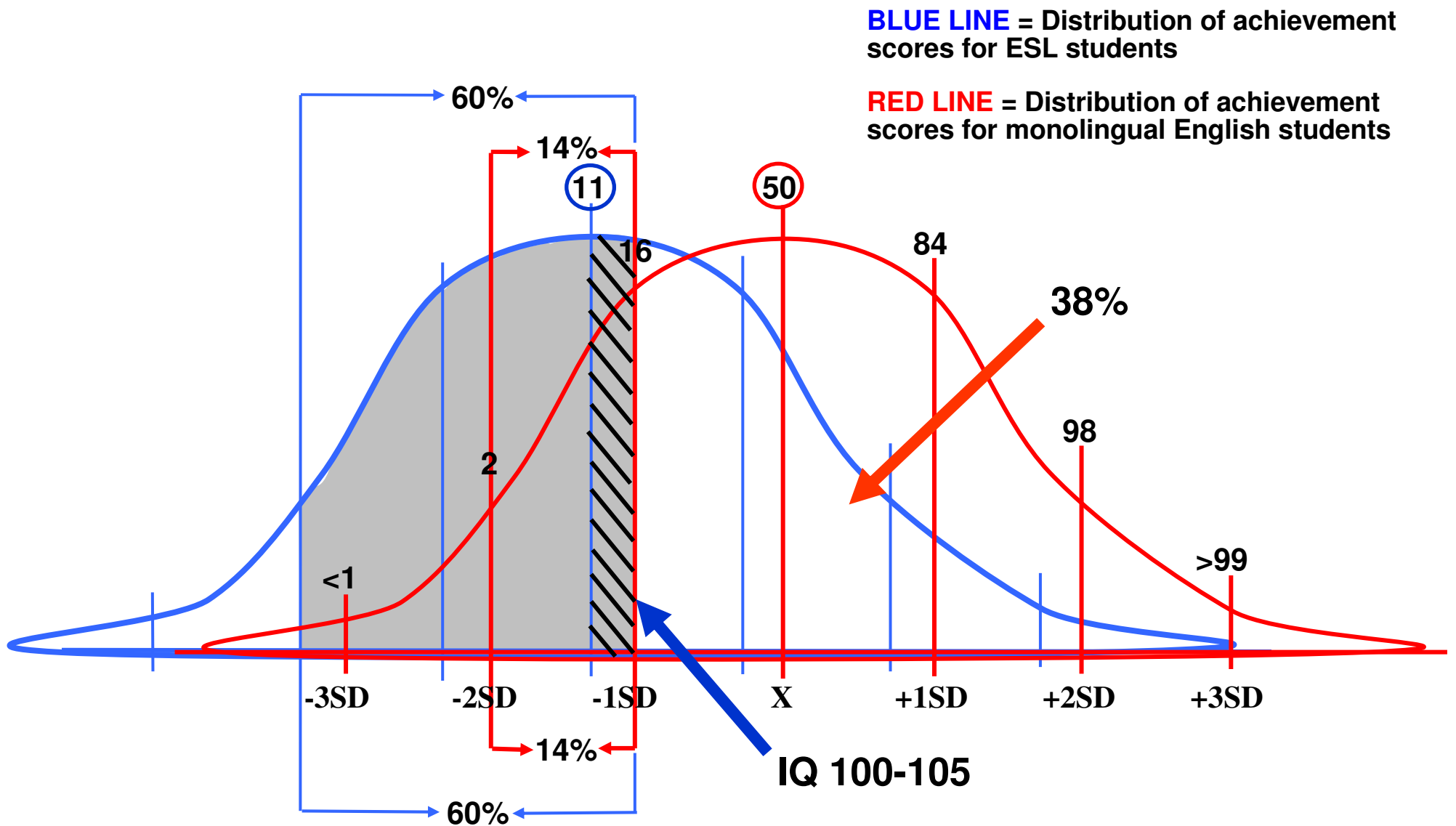
Early exit bilingual program with content ESL – **27% At-Risk**

Model Comparison of Percentage of "At-Risk" Second Language Students



Early exit bilingual program with traditional ESL – 41% At-Risk

Model Comparison of Percentage of "At-Risk" Second Language Students



Traditional (non-content) ESL pullout support only – **60% At-Risk**

Key Findings from Collier and Thomas Longitudinal Study

- *When bilingual education students are tested in English, they typically reach and surpass native English speakers' performance across all subject areas after 4-7 years in a quality bilingual program. Because they have not fallen behind in cognitive and academic growth during the 4-7 years that it takes to build academic proficiency in English, bilingually schooled students typically sustain this level of academic achievement and outperform monolingually schooled students in the upper grades.*

Key predictors of academic success:

- *Cognitively complex academic instruction through the student's first language for as long as possible, and through the second language (English) for a part of the school day;*
- *Use of current approaches to teaching the academic curriculum through first and second language through active, discovery, cognitively complex learning; and*
- *Changes in the sociocultural context of schooling, e.g. integration with English-speaking peer, in a supporting, affirming environment for all students; an additive bilingual context, in which bilingual education is perceived as a "gifted and talented" program for all students: and the transformation of majority and minority student relations in a school to a positive school climate for all students regardless of language and cultural background.*

Key Instructional Factors:

- *Teaching learning strategies, in English, needed to develop thinking skill and problem solving activities;*
- *Implementing approaches that emphasize prior knowledge;*
- *Maintaining respect for home language and culture.*

Summary of Relationship between Special Linguistic Programs and Student Achievement

- *All students benefit from strong cognitive and academic instruction conducted in their first language.*
- *English language learners (ELLs) also benefit from on-grade-level academic instruction in their first language. These benefits begin in the first years of schooling, and if such instruction is sustained, the benefits are cumulative. ELLs whose schooling develops them academically and cognitively, using their first language, are more successful in English-based instruction by the end of their school years than those ELL students who are not provided such first-language instruction.*
- *These effects presume that they also receive on-grade-level academic instruction in and through English for part of the school day, and throughout the school year.*
- *Four to seven years of such combined high quality instruction appears to insure that by the end of high school, typical ELL students will perform as well as typical native speakers of English. The more years in which first-language-based plus English-language-based instruction is present, the greater is the eventual English-based achievement.*
- *The design of programs for English language learners should be responsive to the needs and strengths of local communities, student populations, and available resources. Conventional program labels (such as first-language immersion; transitional; sheltered and content instruction in English; or English as a Second Language) are not useful in predicting school success. However, all effective programs share crucial features: 1) understanding students' language knowledge and needs, 2) planning and delivering instruction that meets those needs, and 3) assessing whether students comprehended the instruction.*
- *For good student achievement, effective teaching methods must be employed by well-prepared teachers. Effective teaching methods have been identified by research, but are not in widespread use - neither in English-mainstream nor in bilingual/ESL classrooms. Effective approaches include students and teachers working together, in discovery processes and supportive interaction across the curriculum, developing language through dialogue, and making school meaningful by connecting instruction to students' strengths and everyday experiences in their homes and communities.*
- *There is a critical shortage of teachers who can work successfully with English language learners, whether they be in mainstream or bilingual/ESL classrooms. Research is underway to document effective methods for recruitment, training, and support of such a workforce.*

RTI and Diverse Children:

Three Phase Model (Kovaleski & Prasse, 2004)

Phase 1: *Determine whether effective instruction is in place for groups of students*

Phase 2: *Provide effective instruction to the target student and measure its effect on performance*

Phase 3: *Refer students whose RTI warrants additional or intensive continuing interventions*

Stated Potential Benefits:

- *“Increased fairness in the assessment process, particularly for minority students”*

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: IDEA 2004 Specifications

Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under this section—

- (i) are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;
- (ii) are provided and administered in the language and form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is not feasible to so provide or administer;
- (iii) are used for purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;
- (iv) are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and
- (v) are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of such assessments.

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: NCCRESt Position Statement 2005

“we are concerned that if we do not engage in dialogue about how culture mediates learning, RTI models will simply be like old wine in a new bottle, in other words, another deficit-based approach to sorting children, particularly children from marginalized communities.”

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Research on Fairness

- Baker & Good (1995) investigated the reliability, validity, and sensitivity of English CBM passages with bilingual Hispanic students and concluded that it was as reliable and valid for them as for native English speakers despite the presence of differential growth rates.

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Research on Fairness

- Gersten & Woodward (1994) suggested that CBM could be used to develop growth rates for ELL students, but erroneously concluded that ELL students generally continue to make academic progress toward grade-level norms whereas ELL students with LD do not.

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Research on Fairness

- Kovaleski & Prasse (2004) stated that one of the potential benefits of RTI included *“increased fairness in the assessment process, particularly for minority students”* but this claim was based largely on erroneous conclusions as described previously. (emphasis added)

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Guidelines for Culturally Responsive Intervention

- What constitutes sufficient “opportunity to learn?”
- What works, and with *whom*?
- What makes an intervention culturally or linguistically appropriate?
- What research guides intervention programs?
- How does RTI measure up to the “Standards?”

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing

- Standard 9.1
 - Testing practice should be designed to reduce threats to the reliability and validity of test score inferences that may arise from language differences
- Standard 9.2
 - When credible research evidence reports that test scores differ in meaning across subgroups of linguistically diverse test takers, then to the extent feasible, test developers should collect for each linguistic subgroup studied, the same form of validity evidence collected for the examinee population as a whole.
- Standard 9.3
 - When testing an examinee proficient in two or more languages for which the test is available, the examinee's relative language proficiencies should be determined. The test generally should be administered in the test taker's most proficient language unless proficiency in the less proficient language is part of the assessment.

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing

- Standard 9.4
 - Linguistic modifications recommended by test publishers as well as the rationale for the modifications should be described in detail in the test manual.
- Standard 9.5
 - When there is credible evidence of score comparability across regular and modified tests or administrations, no flag should be attached to the score. When such evidence is lacking, specific information about the nature of the modification should be provided, if permitted by law, to assist test users properly to interpret and act on test scores.
- Standard 9.6
 - When a test is recommended for use with linguistically diverse test takers, test developers and publishers should provide the information necessary for appropriate test use and interpretation.
- Standard 9.7
 - When a test is translated from one language to another, the methods used in establishing the adequacy of the translation should be described, and empirical and logical evidence should be provided for score reliability and the validity of the translated test's score inferences for the use intended in the linguistic group to be tested.

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing

- Standard 9.8
 - In employment and credentialing testing the proficiency level required in the language of the test should not exceed that appropriate to the relevant occupation or profession.
- Standard 9.9
 - When multiple language versions of a test are intended to be comparable, test developers should report evidence of test comparability.
- Standard 9.10
 - Inferences about test takers' general language proficiency should be based on tests that measure a range of language features, and not a single linguistic skill.
- Standard 9.11
 - When an interpreter is used in testing, the interpreter should be fluent in both the language of the test and the examinee's native language, and should have expertise in translating, and should have a basic understanding of the assessment process.

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Conclusions regarding fairness.

- Response-to-“Instruction:”
 - The most common type of instruction given in schools today, ESL, creates an artificial linguistic “handicap” that puts otherwise capable children at levels far below their age and grade related peers in school achievement. What is “effective instruction” for the average 3rd grader may be totally inappropriate for the average ELL who, nonetheless is in 3rd grade.

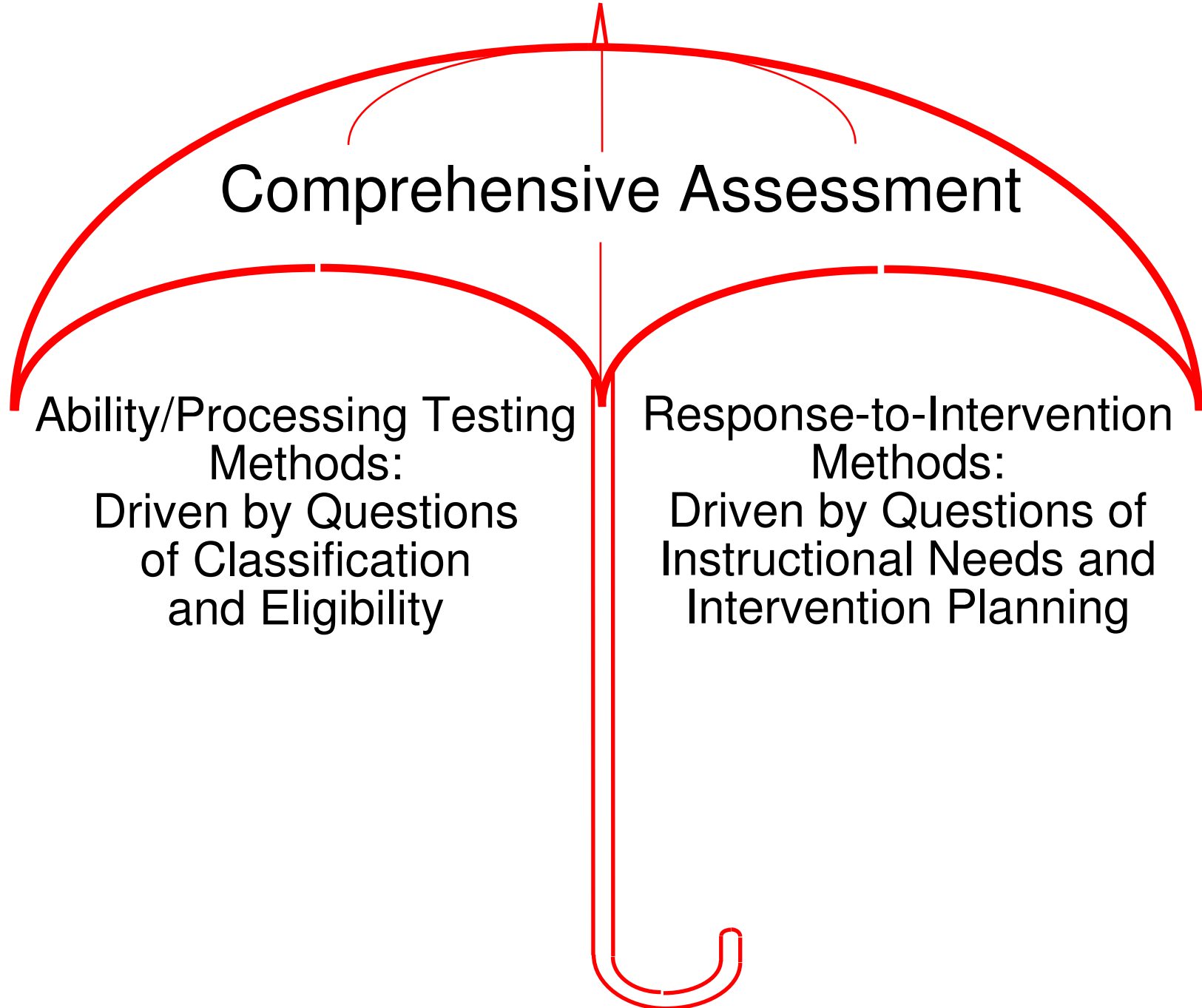
Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Conclusions regarding fairness.

- Curriculum-Based “Measurement:”
 - Unless measurement methods used in RTI, whether CBM or otherwise, account for the differential rates of development that are occurring in the processes related to native language acquisition, English acquisition, and acculturation to the mainstream, there is no guarantee that results will be any more “fair.”

Nondiscriminatory Assessment and RTI: Conclusions regarding fairness.

- Assessments, including RTI, should be selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis.
- The use of RTI, as with any assessment tool or procedure, should be designed to reduce threats to the reliability and validity of inferences that may arise from language (and cultural) differences.

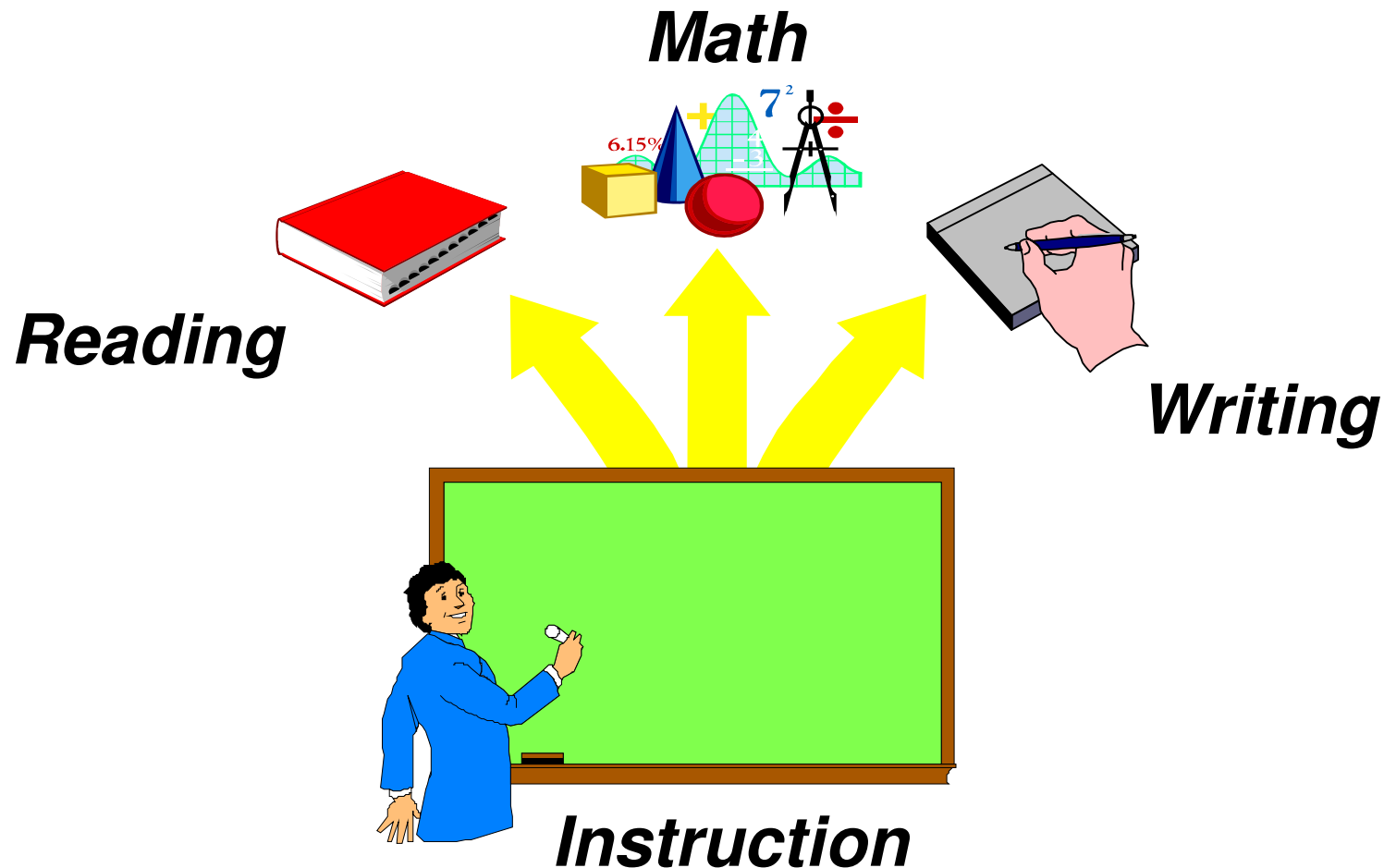
Assessment of Diverse Children: Integrating Alternative and Traditional Assessment



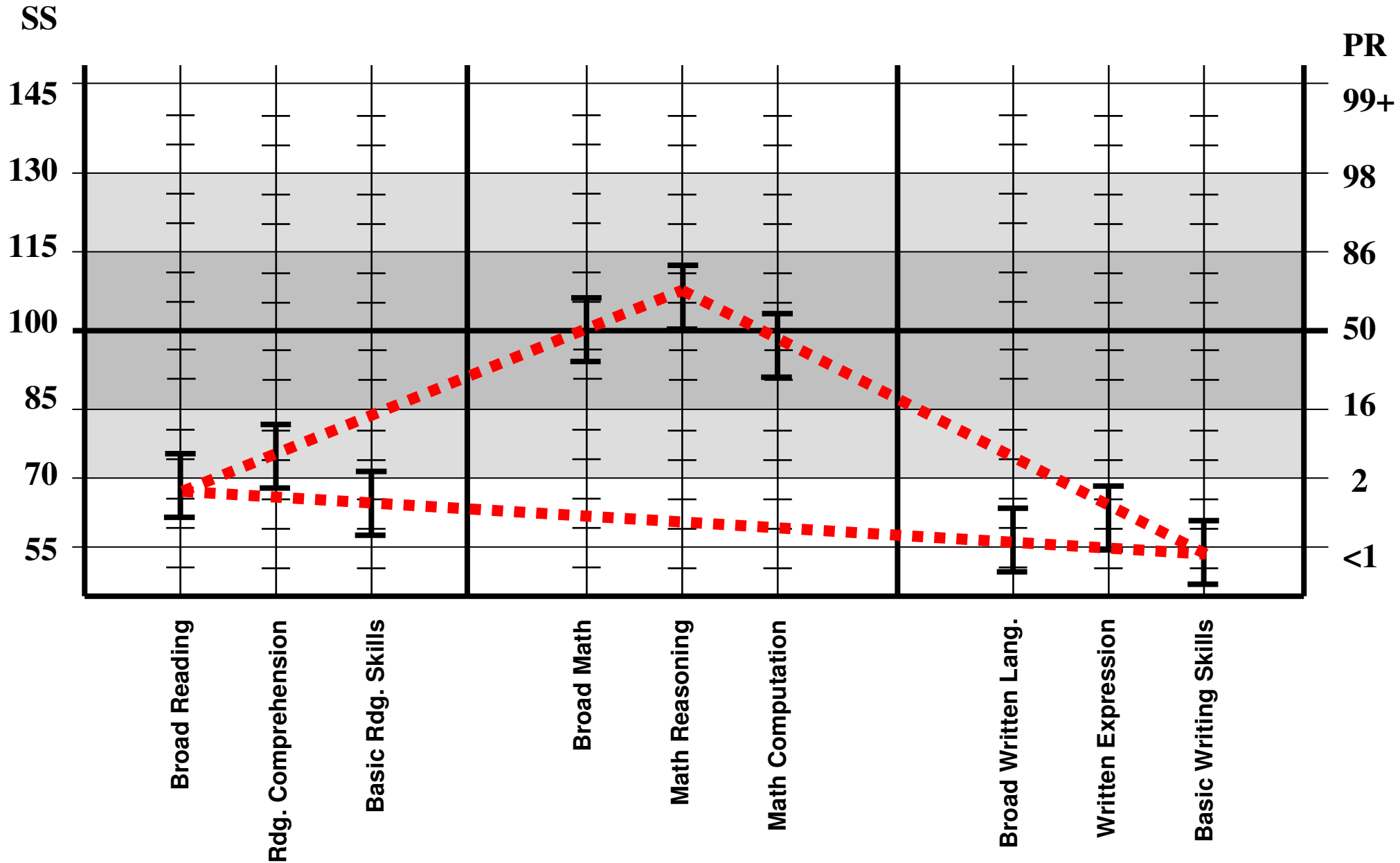
Assessment of Diverse Children

THE IMPORTANCE OF AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

Assessment of a child's academic skills and abilities must directly examine the child's skills and abilities with respect to the actual materials and content used to instruct that child. Thus, authentic assessment seeks to uncover whether learning difficulties can be ascribed to experiential differences rather than ability differences. Not only does this ensure greater validity of the assessment, it provides valuable information necessary to develop specific and effective instructional strategies. In general, evidence of lack of opportunity for learning, ineffective prior instruction, and linguistically inappropriate curricula, are all factors that increase the likelihood that no disability exists.



Assessment of Diverse Children: The “Bilingual Bermuda Triangle”



Assessment of Diverse Children: Classroom Behavior and Performance

Characteristics and behaviors often associated with various learning problems	Common manifestations of English Language Learners (ELLs) during classroom instruction that may mimic various disorders or cognitive deficits.
Slow to begin tasks	ELLs may have limited comprehension of the classroom language so that they are not always clear on how to properly begin tasks or what must be done in order to start them or complete them correctly.
Slow to finish tasks	ELLs, especially those with very limited English skills, often need to translate material from English into their native language in order to be able to work with it and then must translate it back to English in order to demonstrate it. This process extends the time for completion of time-limited tasks that may be expected in the classroom.
Forgetful	ELLs cannot always fully encode information as efficiently into memory as monolinguals because of their limited comprehension of the language and will often appear to be forgetful when in fact the issue relates more to their lack of proficiency with English.
Inattentive	ELLs may not fully understand what is being said to them in the classroom and consequently they don't know when to pay attention or what exactly they should be paying attention to.
Hyperactive	ELLs may appear to be hyperactive because they are unaware of situation-specific behavioral norms, classroom rules, and other rules of social behavior.
Impulsive	ELLs may lack the ability to fully comprehend instructions so that they display a tendency to act impulsively in their work rather than following classroom instructions systematically.
Distractible	ELLs may not fully comprehend the language being spoken in the classroom and therefore will move their attention to whatever they can comprehend appearing to be distractible in the process.
Disruptive	ELLs may exhibit disruptive behavior, particularly excessive talking—often with other ELLs, due to a need to try and figure out what is expected of them or to frustration about not knowing what to do or how to do it.
Disorganized	ELLs often display strategies and work habits that appear disorganized because they don't comprehend instructions on how to organize or arrange materials and may never have been taught efficient learning and problem solving strategies.

Assessment of Diverse Children: Listening Comprehension and Receptive Language

"I pledge a lesson to the frog of the United States
of America, and to the wee puppet for witches hands.
One Asian, under God, in the vestibule,
with little tea and just rice for all."

Source: In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson by Bette Bao Lord, © 1986, Harper Trophy.

Children who are learning a second language hear and interpret sounds in a manner that conforms to words that already exist in their vocabulary. This is a natural part of the first and second language acquisition processes and should not be considered abnormal in any way. It represents the brain's attempt to make sense and meaning of what it perceives by connecting it to what it already knows.

Songs are a good example of this linguistic phenomenon even for native English speakers. Consider these classic misheard lyrics: "*There's a bathroom on the right,*" "*Excuse me while I kiss this guy,*" "*Doughnuts make my brown eyes blue,*" and "*Midnight after you're wasted.*"

Assessment of Diverse Children: Reading Comprehension

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe.
All mimsy were the borogroves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll

Questions: 1) What things were slithy? 2) What did the toves do in the wabe? 3) How were the borogroves? 4) What kind of raths were there?

Meaning in print is not derived solely from word knowledge. Mature and advanced readers eventually discard “decoding” as the primary means for developing reading abilities in favor of orthographic processing of letters, words, sentences, and grammatical structure. Meaning is often inferred from our cultural knowledge and experience with the language. More experience equals clearer meaning and better comprehension.

Assessment of Diverse Children: Reading Comprehension

I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacty uesdnatnrd waht I was
rdgnieg—the phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mnid.
Aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't
mttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny
iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit
pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it
wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not
raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig
huh? Yaeh, and I awlyas tohguht spleling was ipmorantt!

Being able to read the passage above demonstrates how meaning is constructed primarily by orthographic representations and not by simple phonological processing abilities. In this case, semantic meaning is partially derived from access to vocabulary that is triggered by first and last letter positions. But other contextual support, such as short words that are not scrambled, particularly conjunctions, articles, and pronouns, assist greatly in comprehension because they again define grammatical structure. Consider how much more difficult the task would be to read the passage if the word order were completely random and you get a sense about how important grammatical structure alone is to comprehension in reading.

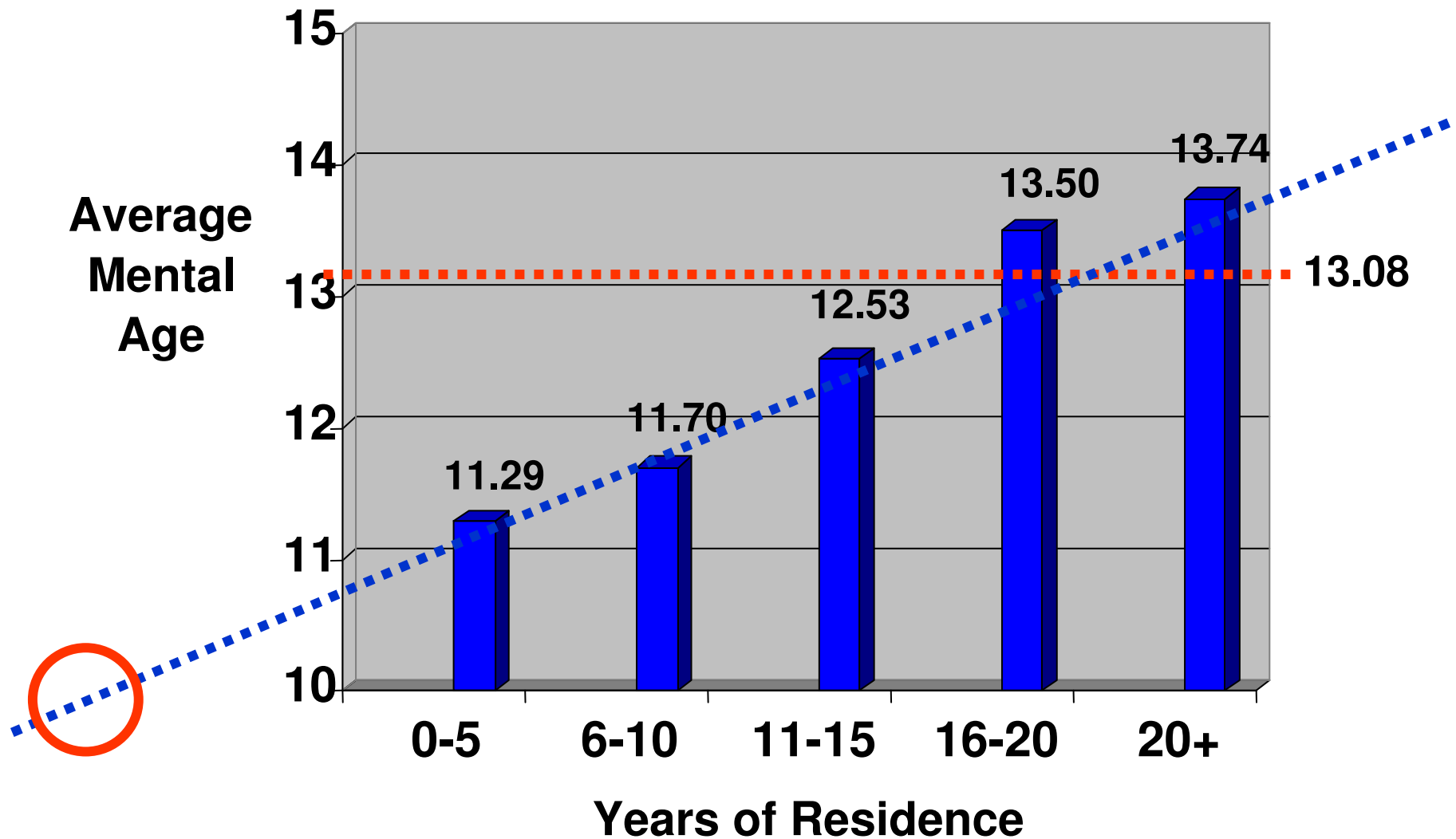
Assessment of Diverse Children: General Information and Incidental Cultural Knowledge

What I thought	The reality
Tabasco – Mexican hot sauce	Made by McIlhenny Co., USA
Kahlua – Hawaiian liquor	Coffee liqueur made in Mexico
Enfamil – Puerto Rican baby formula	Made by Meade-Johnson, USA
Amoco – Bilingual reference to mucous	Brand of British Petroleum gas
Chiclet – Mexican chewing gum	Made by Cadbury/Adams, USA
Toto – Strange name for a dog	Dorothy's dog's real name

Acculturation to the mainstream plays a significant role in linguistic development and learning in and out of the classroom. The presence and interaction of dual cultural contexts with which to embed certain culturally-specific words or ideas in English may lead to a failure to comprehend or acquire the true meaning of the word or the concept.

Idioms are another example of this problem.

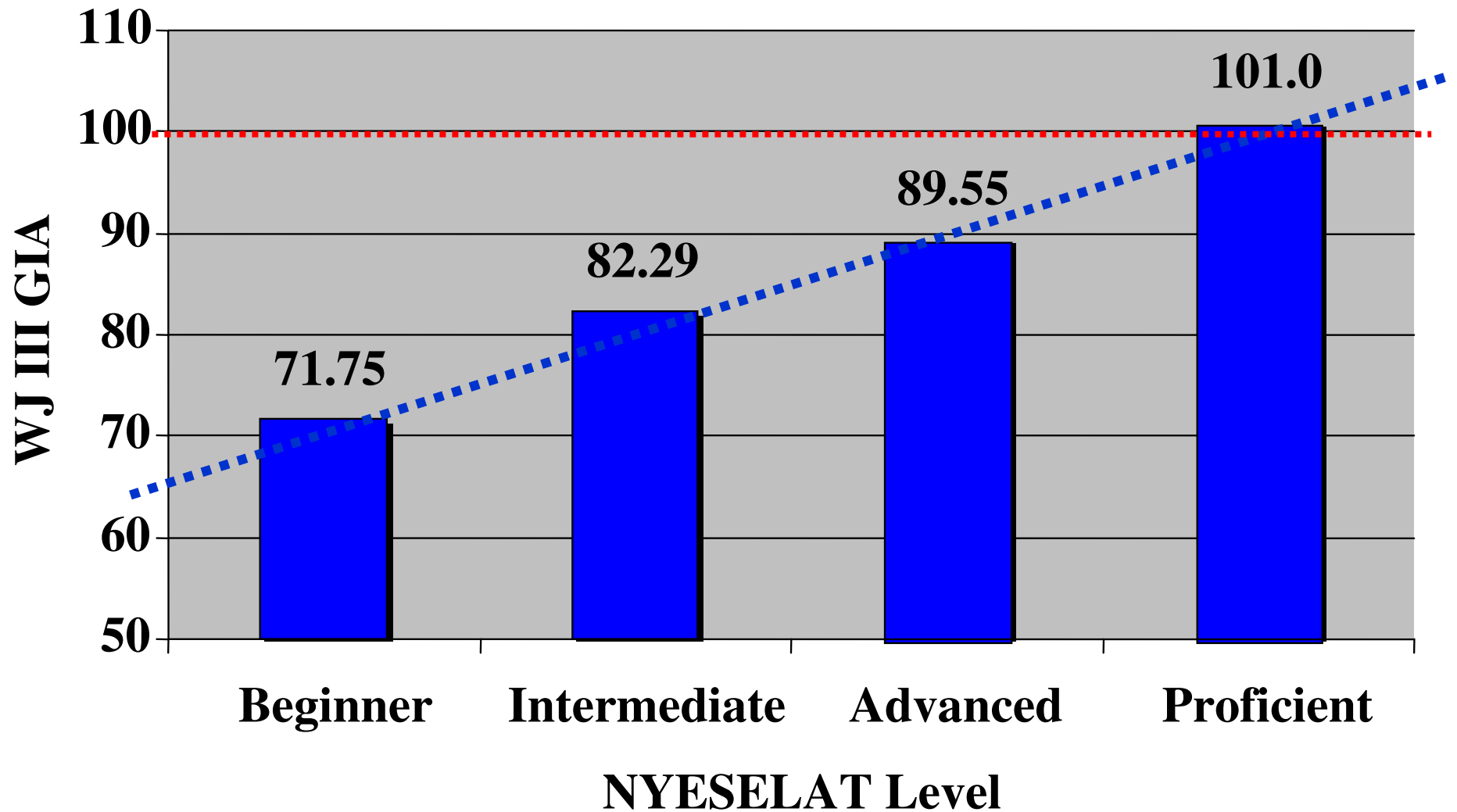
Acculturation and English Language Proficiency: Yerkes' 1921 data from Army testing.



Average score for native English speakers on Beta = 101.6
Average score for non-native English speakers on Beta = 77.8

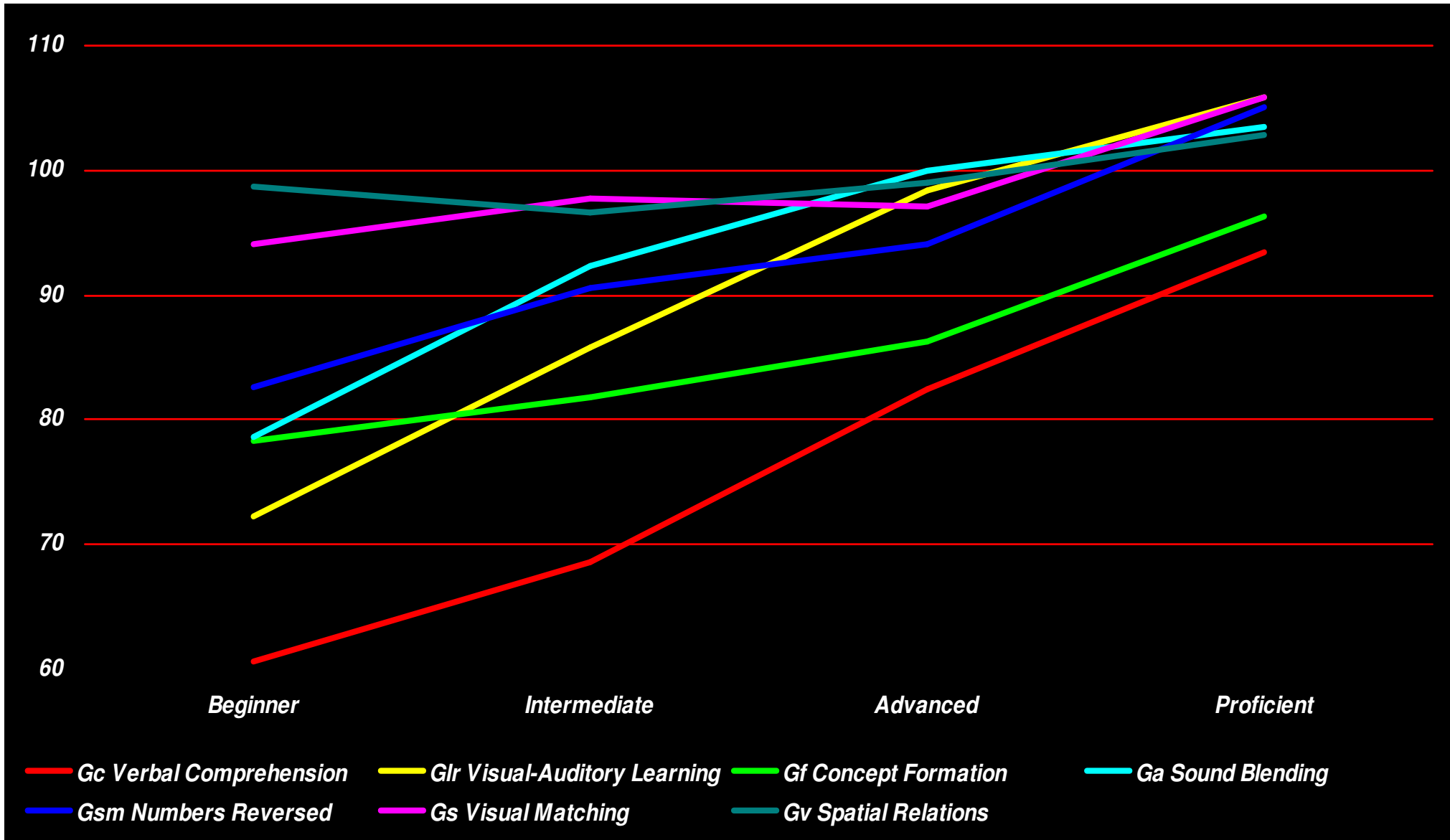
Acculturation and English Language Proficiency

Mean WJ III GIA across the four levels of language proficiency on the New York State ESL Achievement Test



Acculturation and English Language Proficiency: Relationship to Cognitive Abilities

Mean subtest scores across the seven WJ III subtests according to language proficiency level on the NYSELSAT



Interesting Information on Eating and Drinking and Speaking

Facts:

- A) The Japanese eat very little fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.
- B) On the other hand, the French eat a lot of fat and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.
- C) The Japanese drink very little red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans.
- D) The Italians drink a lot of red wine, and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans

Conclusion:

Eat and drink what you like. It's speaking English that kills you.

Selected Bibliography on Assessment

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